

WILDLIFE AREAS PROJECT

In Arizona, Commission Rule R-12-4-803 describes thirty-two sanctioned wildlife areas. They include a wide spectrum of habitat types ranging from low elevation wetlands to high elevation grasslands with resource management objectives aimed at game and nongame, aquatic and terrestrial species. Wildlife areas are established to protect wildlife and habitat resources, and, in some cases, to enable special management strategies such as hunting regulations requested by private or public conservation organizations.

The history of the Department's wildlife areas is diverse, with some areas under Commission ownership for more than 60 years and others subject to Commission ownership for only the past few years. From the 1940's to the late 1970's, eighteen of the Commission's wildlife areas were established with funds from federal programs. In the earliest years the primary federal programs included Pittman Robertson (PR) funds for wildlife restoration and Dingel Johnson (DJ) funding for sport fish restoration, or a combination of both (FW). Federal dollars have typically been matched with state dollars at a rate of 25% state or other eligible funds to 75% federal funds. Acquisition of additional habitat slowed during the 1980s. When the voters approved the Heritage Fund in 1990, 40% of the Identification, Investigation, Acquisition, Protection and Management (IIAPM) portion of the Heritage Fund was directed at acquiring additional wildlife habitat with a threatened and endangered species component. The Department has diversified the costs of acquisitions and now land purchases are often funded using a variety of funding sources including PR-W, DJ-F, Heritage Fund, Waterfowl Funds and Elk Special Tag Funds. Such a diversity of funding also provides greater opportunities to conduct or develop operation and maintenance or enhancement activities.

The Commission owns most of the areas described in rule (R-12-4-803), although several are federal lands managed under interagency agreements. Two others (Arivaipa and Tucson Mountain Wildlife Areas) have neither ownership nor management interest by the Commission. As a point of clarification, both the formally designated wildlife areas and other Commission managed properties that require an operational commitment benefiting wildlife, are henceforth referred to collectively as wildlife areas (e.g. lakes and other commission managed properties not included in R-12-4-803).

The following data demonstrates the scope and diversity of 72 properties under this broader designation:

- The Commission owns or manages 274,507 acres of land statewide. Of that number, 21,774 acres are conveyed to the Commission in deed or patent. See table below.
- Individual wildlife areas range from 30 acres of deeded land at House Rock Wildlife Area to 9,438 acres of deeded land at Raymond Wildlife Area. Additional acres are added to these wildlife areas through other land use agreements such cooperative agreements.

- Twenty of the areas include rare wetland habitat
- Six of the areas are staffed year-round with resident managers
- Geographically, they are widely distributed with at least one wildlife area located in Arizona counties, except for Greenlee and La Paz Counties
- Six are located within 30 miles of a major Arizona city, thus providing unique outdoor recreation and urban wildlife opportunities

The Commission's wildlife areas are of interest to a diverse constituency. They are essential to the Commission's commitment to long-range programs to manage, preserve, and provide for harvest of wildlife as mandated by ARS 17-231.A.2, and are therefore popular with hunters. However, under ARS 17-298 the Commission is also mandated to protect threatened and endangered species and sensitive habitat. Wildlife areas also provide a broad range of wildlife viewing opportunities to non-consumptive users. For example, at Whitewater Draw, 3,000 visitors have been recorded annually during the "Wings Over Willcox" celebration. Whether habitat for big game, sandhill cranes, spinedace, or sport fish, Arizona's wildlife areas serve an undeniable role in the conservation and maintenance of our wildlife heritage.

Name	Key species/habitat	County	Original funding
Region 1 Wildlife Areas			
Allen Severson Wildlife Area	Sensitive species (e.g., bald eagle) waterfowl, cormorants, big game.	Navajo	Waterfowl
Apache Trout Habitat	Stream habitat protection, Sensitive species (e.g., SW willow flycatcher), riparian (e.g., AZ Willow)	Apache	Fed Aid
Bear Canyon Lake	Riparian habitat, Osprey & Bald Eagle foraging habitat, Common Loon staging habitat.	Coconino	Fed Aid
Bear Springs	Big game, riparian habitat	Navajo	N/A
Becker Lake Wildlife Area	Sensitive species (e.g., bald eagle, LC spinedace, SW willow flycatcher), fishing, waterfowl, riparian habitat	Apache	Fed Aid
Big Lake	Osprey & Bald Eagle foraging habitat, Waterfowl, migratory bird staging habitat, fishing.	Apache	Fed Aid
Black Canyon Lake	Osprey & Bald Eagle foraging habitat, Waterfowl, migratory bird staging habitat.	Navajo	Fed Aid
PS Ranch and Fite Property	Mexican wolf, big game, riparian habitat.	Apache	N/A
Chevelon Canyon Lake	Osprey & Bald Eagle foraging habitat, Waterfowl, migratory bird habitat	Coconino	Fed Aid
Chevelon Canyon Wildlife Area	Big game, riparian habitat.	Coconino	Fed Aid
Chevelon Creek Wildlife Area	Waterfowl, big game, stream habitat protection, riparian, sensitive species (e.g., LC spinedace)	Navajo	Waterfowl

Wildlife Areas Project

Page 3 of 7

April 11, 2007

Concho Lake and Land	Waterfowl, riparian habitat, wintering bald eagle.	Apache	Fed Aid
Fools Hollow Lake	Sensitive species (e.g., osprey) flood easement, fishing, riparian habitat.	Navajo	Fed Aid
Grassland Wildlife Area	Sensitive species (e.g., LC spinedace), big game, waterfowl, riparian	Apache	IIPAM
Jaques Marsh Wildlife Area	Waterfowl, big game, riparian, sensitive species (e.g., bald eagles), colonial birds.	Navajo	Waterfowl
Name	Key species/habitat	County	Original funding
Region 1 Wildlife Areas			
Lee Valley Lake	Sensitive species (e.g., osprey, AZ willow), Water Rights, fishing.	Apache	Fed Aid
Luna Lake Wildlife Area	Sensitive species (e.g., bald eagle), fishing, waterfowl, , riparian habitat.	Apache	Fed Aid
Nelson Lake	Sensitive species (e.g., bald eagle), fishing, waterfowl, , riparian habitat.	Apache	Fed Aid
Rainbow Lake Lands	Fishing	Navajo	Fed Aid
Redhead Marsh	Waterfowl, cormorants, big game, riparian habitat.	Apache	Waterfowl
Show Low Lake	Fishing	Navajo	Fed Aid
Sipe Wildlife Area	Sensitive species (e.g., LC spinedace), big game, waterfowl, riparian habitat.	Apache	Various
Springerville Marsh	Waterfowl, colonial birds.	Apache	Waterfowl
Wenima Wildlife Area	Sensitive species (e.g., LC spinedace, SW willow flycatcher), big game, waterfowl, riparian, stream habitat protection	Apache	Various
Willow Springs Lake	Sensitive species (e.g., osprey) fishing, riparian habitat.	Coconino	Fed Aid
Woods Canyon Lake	Riparian habitat, Osprey & Bald Eagle foraging habitat, Common Loon staging habitat.	Coconino	Fed Aid
Name	Key species/habitat	County	Original funding
Region 2 Wildlife Areas			
Coconino Lake	Sensitive species (e.g., osprey), fishing, riparian habitat.	Coconino	Fed Aid
Gibson Parcel	Big Game Habitat	Coconino	N/A
House Rock Wildlife Area	Big game habitat, sensitive species (bats), grassland birds.	Coconino	Fed Aid

Wildlife Areas Project

Page 4 of 7

April 11, 2007

Kinnikinick Lake	Sensitive species (e.g., bald eagle), fishing, waterfowl, , riparian habitat.	Coconino	Fed Aid
Knoll Lake	Big game habitat, sensitive species (bats), grassland birds.	Coconino	Fed Aid
Lamar Haines Wildlife Area	Alpine birds, big game habitat.	Coconino	N/A
Raymond Wildlife Area	Big game habitat, Gunnison's prairie dogs, sensitive species (bats), grassland birds, leopard frog and native fish refugia, Waterfowl	Coconino	Fed Aid
Sunflower Flat Wildlife Area	Waterfowl habitat	Coconino	Waterfowl
Verde Valley Riparian Areas	Riparian habitat	Yavapai	IIPAM
Name	Key species/habitat	County	
Region 3 Wildlife Areas			
Colorado R. Nature Center	Small Game Habitat	Mohave	N/A
Lynx Lake	Sensitive species (e.g., bald eagle), waterfowl, big game.	Yavapai	Fed Aid
Topock Marsh	Waterfowl, colonial birds.	Mohave	IIPAM
Upper Verde River Wildlife Area	Riparian habitat, wintering bald eagle habitat.	Yavapai	IIPAM
Name	Key species/habitat	County	Original funding
Region 4 Wildlife Areas			
Alamo Wildlife Area	Sensitive species (e.g. bald eagle, SW Flycatcher, leopard frog) Riparian habitat, big game habitat.	Mohave	Fed Aid
Mittry Lake Wildlife Area	Clapper and black rails, colonial birds, waterfowl, riparian habitat.	Yuma	Various
Painted Rock Wildlife Area	Waterfowl	Maricopa	Waterfowl
Quigley Wildlife Area	Clapper and black rails, colonial birds, waterfowl.	Yuma	IIPAM
Texas Hill Lands		Yuma	N/A
Yuma Proving Grounds	Water developments for big game, nongame (e.g. bats and desert birds)	Yuma	Fed Aid
Name	Key species/habitat	County	Original funding
Region 5 Wildlife Areas			
Aravaipa Canyon Wildlife Area	Native fish, Bighorn sheep	Graham	N/A
Arivaca Lake and Land	Game fish, colonial birds	Pima	Fed Aid
Bog Hole Wildlife Area	Waterfowl, wetland herptiles	Santa Cruz	Waterfowl
Cluff Ranch Wildlife Area	Game birds, bats.	Graham	Fed Aid

Wildlife Areas Project

Page 5 of 7

April 11, 2007

Goodding Research Natural Area	Mearn's quail, Leopard frog, Native fish.	Santa Cruz	N/A
Manhattan Claims	Big Game Habitat	Cochise	N/A
May Memorial Wildlife Area	Big Game Habitat	Cochise	N/A
Parker Canyon Lake	Game fish, colonial birds	Santa Cruz	Fed Aid
Pena Blanca Lake	Game fish, colonial birds	Santa Cruz	Fed Aid
Picacho Reservoir	Wetland habitat, colonial birds, waterfowl, clapper rail	Pinal	Waterfowl
Riggs Flat Lake	Game fish, bats	Graham	Fed Aid
Roper Lake and Land	Waterfowl, game fish, Neotropical birds	Graham	Fed Aid
Rose Canyon Lake	Game fish	Pima	Fed Aid
Tucson Mountain Wildlife Area	Desert tortoise, javelina	Pima	Fed Aid
Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area	Waterfowl habitat, Sandhill cranes, Leopard frog	Cochise	IIPAM, waterfowl
Willcox Playa Wildlife Area	Waterfowl, Sandhill cranes, colonial birds.	Cochise	Waterfowl
Name	Key species/habitat	County	Original funding
Region 6 Wildlife Areas			
Arlington Wildlife Area	Yuma Clapper Rail, Colonial water birds, waterfowl, W.W. & Mourning dove,	Maricopa	Fed Aid
Base and Meridian Wildlife Area	Yuma Clapper Rail, Colonial water birds, waterfowl, Neotropical Songbirds, Anglers	Maricopa	Fed Aid
Cunningham Tracts	Turkey, elk, Chiricahua leopard frog	Gila	N/A
PLO 1015 Land	Yuma Clapper Rail, Colonial water birds, waterfowl, W.W. & Mourning dove	Maricopa	Waterfowl
Green Tract	White winged dove	Maricopa	Waterfowl
GSA Tract	White winged dove	Maricopa	N/A
Powers Butte Wildlife Area	Yuma Clapper Rail, Colonial water birds, waterfowl, W.W. & Mourning dove,	Maricopa	Waterfowl
Robbins Butte Wildlife Area	Yuma Clapper Rail, Colonial water birds, waterfowl, W.W. & Mourning dove, Gambel quail	Maricopa	Fed Aid
Roosevelt Diversion Dam	Native fish, sport fish.	Gila	Fed Aid
Roosevelt Lake Wildlife Area	Canada Geese, SW Flycatcher, Bald Eagle	Gila	Waterfowl
Santa Rosa Wash	Javelina, Neotropical songbirds	Pinal	IIPAM
Three Bar Wildlife Area	Big game, Bald Eagle, predators and furbearers.	Gila	N/A

Wildlife area management plans shall incorporate a six-year activity matrix (synchronized with the Department's strategic plan period) that facilitates the identification and categorization of proposed management activities as well as establishing relative priorities and cost estimates. All existing property management plans should be phased through a re-evaluation process and brought into compliance with the adopted format over a period of time, projecting through Wildlife 2012. Management activities are to be segregated into the following categories:

Essential Restoration – Improvements or upgrades necessary to restore elements of the property to a baseline condition consistent with the intent of its purchase, to comply with mandated requirements as follows:

1. Health and Safety Requirements
2. Statutory Requirements
3. Habitat Restoration (initial recovery of severely degraded habitat)

Base Operations and Maintenance – Both recurrent and unanticipated commitments necessary to implement the properties management objectives and preserve or extend the useful life of the properties' assets.

Enhancement – Improvement measures (both habitat and facilities) that develop a property's intrinsic value beyond the baseline condition and which are not mandated by original funding criteria.

OPERATIONAL APPROACHES

1. Acquire and utilize the necessary equipment and skilled personnel to develop operate and maintain building facilities and other infrastructure on Department owned or operated wildlife areas statewide. (1.A.4, 1.B.1)
2. Appropriately maintain facilities and equipment acquired for the operation and maintenance of wildlife areas. (1.A.4, 1.B.1)
3. Sustain the financial ability to preserve capital assets and lands acquired under federal aid eligibility standards. (1.A.4, 1.A.6, 1.B.1)
4. Sustain the financial ability to preserve capital assets and lands acquired under Heritage eligibility standards. (1.A.4, 1.A.6, 1.B.1)
5. Implement planned wildlife area management objectives as established in updated management plans. (1.A.4, 1.A.6, 1.B.1)
6. Implement an annual process to review property management plan objectives, consider the sharing of Department resources, review the prior year's performance and develop

new annual work plan priorities that assure the most efficient allocation of funds and deployment of Department-wide resources. (3.A.2, 3.A.4)

7. Provide quality hunting and other wildlife related recreation on federal aid wildlife areas through the operation and maintenance of buildings, structures, infrastructure and the protection and enhancement of habitat. Emphasis will be on promoting watchable wildlife and environmental educational opportunities. (1.B.1-6)

LINKAGES TO OTHER OPERATIONAL PLANS

1. Business Administration Program
 - Purchasing/Finance and Accounting
 - Materials/ Contractor Procurement/Accounts Payable
 - Human Resources
 - Funds/ Planning
 - Assistance Agreement and Budget Management
 - Risk Management
2. Game Subprogram
 - Population Management
 - Population Enhancement Projects
3. Nongame Subprogram
 - Specialized Wildlife Projects
 - Apache Trout Fence Maintenance
4. Habitat Project
 - Project Evaluation Program
5. Research Project
 - Water Quality/ Wildlife use